

COUNTY OF SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA
BOARD OF SUPERVISORS POLICY

Subject

Legislative Policy: Issues Related to Children and Youth

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Purpose

To establish the Board of Supervisors' legislative policy regarding children, youth and families, and to provide guidance to the County's legislative representatives when advocating the County's interests to legislators, other elected officials and policy makers.

Background

There has been a growing concern expressed over a need for emphasis on issues related to children and youth. The general concepts that will be followed when advocating issues that affect children, youth and families are outlined below.

1. The well-being, protection, and healthy development of children, youth and families are essential to the residents of San Diego County.
2. The family is the primary caregiver and the source of social learning and must be supported and strengthened while always ensuring the safety of children.
3. The safety of children must always be ensured in determining necessary, appropriate services and other support to families (e.g. child development activities, private health insurance options, extracurricular activities, and enrichment opportunities available from community partners or friends).
4. When families are unable to provide for their children's basic needs and safety, it is society's responsibility to work with them by assisting with the provision of needed services that are efficient, effective, coordinated and readily available.
5. Social organizations (public and private), working collaboratively toward common goals for children and families, can accomplish more than each organization working independently.
6. Early intervention services create conditions and foster personal attributes that promote the well-being and self-sufficiency of individuals, families and communities.

Policy

The legislative policy of the Board of Supervisors regarding issues related to children and youth is to:

1. Support legislation that would remove barriers to public and private interagency collaboration and other efforts to promote and provide preventive and ongoing physical, oral, mental health, and substance abuse services for pregnant women, children, youth and families. Barriers include regulations that address confidentiality and consent for release of information that do not allow agencies

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- to share information, including information that is stored electronically, when they have a client in common.
2. Support legislation that would provide continued state financing of critical local child immunization programs and a "no shot-no school" policy.
 3. Support legislation that would provide funding for health coverage for low-income children, youth, and families, including:
 - Preventive health (including prenatal care, dental care, and chronic disease prevention);
 - Early intervention;
 - Mental health;
 - Substance abuse prevention and treatment; and
 - Necessary facilities, equipment, and operational costs.
 4. Support legislation that would provide funding for support services for children, youth (including incarcerated minors), and families, to help prevent child abuse and neglect and support family reunification, including:
 - Parent/relative support groups;
 - Parenting classes;
 - Respite/childcare;
 - Homemaker services;
 - Referrals for substance abuse treatment;
 - Supervised visitation;
 - Transportation; and
 - Necessary facilities, equipment, and operational costs.
 5. Support legislation that would expand funding at both the state and federal levels to increase the availability of quality child care for low-income families including those with special needs children and ensure a high standard of such care.
 6. Support legislation that would expand funding at the state level, through the Department of Social Services, to support regulatory and inspection activities that ensure the safety of children in licensed family child care and child care centers.
 7. Support legislation that would expand training for family child care providers to ensure quality care, including best health and safety practices, for infants and toddlers, school-aged children, children in non-traditional hours of care and for special needs children.
 8. Support legislation that would create and fund an array of positive community-based youth development opportunities, including before and after school programs, for school-aged children and youth with priority given to programs for at-risk youth.
 9. Support legislation that would maintain the current principles that ensure that Juvenile Court Law continues to recognize the need to protect the public and minors, while preserving and strengthening families whenever possible.

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10. Support legislation that would maintain and expand the exercise of judicial discretion in delinquency sentencing matters.
11. Support legislation that would provide special training about the needs of children and families involved in juvenile court proceedings to judges, attorneys (especially those representing children and youth), police officers, and others involved in Juvenile Court matters.
12. Support legislation that would require parental accountability and financial responsibility from parents for the conduct of their minor children.
13. Support legislation that would change public assistance programs to promote parental responsibility and provide necessary supports to address survival, self-reliance, and self-sufficiency, including parenting education, ensuring that families become more effective in supporting their children.
14. Support legislation that would provide preventive services and efforts designed to reduce the rate of intentional violence against self, family and others in the community.
15. Support legislation that would provide funding for collaborative efforts in dealing with truancy and dropout prevention and intervention efforts.
16. Support legislation that would enable local government to blend state and federal funding from various categorical sources (and obtain related waivers) to provide wrap-around integrated services to at-risk children and families, including those at risk for delinquency and poor long-term health or disability.
17. Support legislation that would allow the use of state and federal crime bill funds for a full range of prevention, early intervention and community-based options (e.g., secure detention beds; non-residential programs; boot camps; after-care and intensive supervision programs; ranches and camps; et al.) and advocate that funding allocations to local governments are based on relative criminal justice expenditures.
18. Support legislation that would provide a stable funding base and sufficient resources for legally mandated juvenile justice services.
19. Support legislation that would develop major system changes to provide a continuum of integrated, flexible, responsive services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to meet diverse families' and communities' needs.
20. Support legislation that would resolve conflicts among the Education Code, the Welfare and Institutions Code and the Health and Safety Code to further the development of a continuum of integrated, flexible, responsive services that are culturally and linguistically appropriate to meet diverse families' and communities' needs.
21. Support legislation that would ensure that no unfunded mandates are imposed on departments that provide health, human, and probation services.
22. Support legislation that would decrease barriers and provide funding for services to increase the permanency, stability and well-being of children in foster care.

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23. Support legislation that would provide funding to assist in successfully maintaining children in the least restrictive, family-like setting.

24. Support legislation to provide funding for the San Pasqual Academy.

Responsible Departments

Health and Human Services Agency

Public Safety Group

Office of Strategy and Intergovernmental Affairs

Sunset Date

This policy will be reviewed for continuance on 12-31-14.

References

Board Action 10/18/88 (7)

Board Action 4/13/99 (42A)

Board Action 1/13/04 (13)

Board Action 12/11/07 (14)